

DelDOT Announces Business Process Improvements

The Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) has announced several initiatives to streamline processes and contribute to fostering economic growth across the state.

“During my statewide business roundtable meetings, I asked business owners, “What can the state do better to help our businesses grow?” I received great feedback and I’m glad that we are already making changes and improvements based on that feedback. I appreciate DelDOT moving quickly to identify solutions that will help our business community thrive,” said Governor John Carney.

“Following Governor Carney’s request, DelDOT has taken a comprehensive look at how we can improve and in some instances expedite our processes to ensure we are not delaying economic development projects. I believe the actions we’ve outlined and committed to are a good step in assisting this effort,” said Secretary of Transportation Jennifer Cohan.

“These are encouraging steps forward,” said State House Minority Leader Danny Short, R-Seafood. “At the business forum we held at the Seafood Library earlier this year, many business owners expressed frustration in their dealings with DelDOT. These policy changes are a credit to Sec. Cohan and her agency. It demonstrates a good faith effort to take legitimate criticisms to heart and make needed enhancements. It is my hope they will continue this work, constantly reassessing the agency’s operations with an eye towards improvement.”

“The steps the Governor and DelDOT have taken to listen to the business community, and more importantly act on their comments is greatly appreciated!” Said State Representative S. Quinton

“Quinn” Johnson, D-Middletown. “This is how our government and private sector should work together. There are reasons a process of approval is needed, however that process can at times be long and actually deter economic growth. I am thankful the Governor and DelDOT have come up with initiatives that will help speed up the process and further enhance economic development in the State. Economic development means jobs for Delawareans!”

“Jen Cohan and her leadership team have been outstanding in reaching out to the engineering community to improve the overall review process which is so critical for economic development within our state,” added Mike Riemann, President of ACEC Delaware.

The following are steps DelDOT has and will be implementing to promote economic development throughout the state:

Shorten DelDOT’s Review Time: 44 Days to 31 Days

Currently, the Department has a performance measure that staff must review and provide comments on development plans within 44 days of receipt. Understanding the role DelDOT has in the success of economic development in Delaware, we have shortened development plan review time to 31 days. In addition, DelDOT is working with the engineering community toward limiting the number of times a plan must be reviewed by staff, with the goal that approval will be given after no more than two reviews. In order to accomplish this, staff will require an in-person meeting with the developer and engineer after the first review if comments and outstanding items are present.

Expedite Small Business and Redevelopment Plans

The Letter of No Contention (LONC) approval process was created to process commercial projects that currently have an existing entrance in an expedited manner, rather than going through the formal process. The goal of this process is to grant approval within three weeks, and DelDOT has implemented this change effective immediately. DelDOT has been working

with the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) and other stakeholders to expand the scope of those eligible for a LONC.

Expedited Review Team for Economic Development Projects

DelDOT has created and implemented the Expedited Review Team to work with the local land use agencies to identify criteria to use to expedite the approval processes for projects that will have a large economic impact to the state.

Helping Municipalities and Counties Identify Economic Development Areas

In the next year, DelDOT, in conjunction with the Office of Statewide Planning and the League of Local Governments and county governments, will continue to identify growth areas throughout the state where we can attract businesses to relocate and expand. This can be done through the creation of Transportation Improvement Districts (TIDs) where the DelDOT and the Town or County are willing to make infrastructure investments in order to spark economic development growth. DelDOT has had success with the creation of a TID in southern New Castle County and the State is currently working with Sussex County on the development of the Henlopen TID.